

CBS EVENING NEWS
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CPO5>NICARAGUA/CIA>RATHER: More controversy today over U.S. backing of <
>MANUAL>rebels fighting Nicaragua's Sandinista regime. It involves a CIA-produced manual for the rebels, one that provoked quick congressional calls for an explanation by the spy agency. Robert Schakne has the details.

SCHAKNE: This document, prepared one year ago by the Central Intelligence Agency, is a textbook for terrorism. It advises Nicaraguan guerrillas on the tactics of mob violence, kidnapping, blackmail and what is called 'neutralizing political enemies.' The document was distributed to leaders of CIA-financed rebels in northern Nicaragua as a manual for psychological warfare. The Congressional Intelligence Committee today confirmed its CIA origin. The document advises guerrillas to 'destroy police and military installations, to kidnap all officials or agents of the Sandinista government.' It calls for 'equipping demonstrators with clubs, iron rods and, if possible, small firearms in order to provoke a confrontation with the authorities which would create a martyr for the cause.' If possible, the document says, 'professional criminals will be hired to carry out specific jobs.' And the document says, quote, 'It is possible to neutralize carefully selected targets such as judges, police and state security officials,' unquote. MORTON HALPERIN (former national security assistant): There would be no doubt in the minds of the CIA people who wrote it and no doubt in the minds of anybody who read it that the recommendation was that in certain circumstances, people should be assassinated.

SCHAKNE: Rebel leaders say the document came to them from a collaborator whom they would not identify. But they say that in the manual distributed to the troops, they edited out those pages that call for political terrorism.

BOSCO MATAMOROS: (contras spokesman): We reject any form of assassination that is call, ah, ah, and can be called terrorism. And we condemn also any form of murder, whatever, ah, for political purposes.

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SCHAKNE: If the CIA has in fact suggested political murder, that would violate presidential executive orders banning assassinations. REP. THOMAS DOWNEY (D-N.Y.): I do not want my government producing manuals that instruct people how to become martyrs, how to assassinate people, to hire criminals.

SCHAKNE: Public disclosure of the CIA document produced instant headlines in Nicaragua and an immediate, angry response from the Sandinista government. SAUL ARANA (Nicaraguan spokesman): The document represents the most, in the most cruel way, I mean how much the CIA is involved in this activity against Nicaragua.

SCHAKNE: Meantime, the guerrilla war goes on. The rebels claim they set the fire over the weekend that destroyed three of Managua's major warehouses. In Washington, the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee compared this latest revelation about the CIA to the mining of Nicaraguan harbors. And he called it a disaster for U.S. foreign policy. Robert Schakne, CBS News, Washington.